

## Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 DAMASC 04593 201428Z  
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W  
-----129281 201438Z /42

O 201359Z JUL 77  
FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 4024

S E C R E T DAMASCUS 4593

NODIS

FOR SECRETARY FROM MURPHY

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PFOR XF US  
SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER BEGIN'S "PEACE PROPOSAL"

REF: STATE 168595

1. I GOT ARABIC TRANSLATION OF YOUR MESSAGE INTO ASSAD'S HANDS THIS MORNING VIA HIS PRIVATE SECRETARY MINUTES BEFORE A TWO AND ONE-HALF HOUR INTERVIEW HE THEN PROCEEDED TO GIVE TO NEWSWEEK SENIOR EDITOR ARNAUD DEBORCHGRAVE. DEBORCHGRAVE, DRAWING ON ISRAELI PRESS LEAKS OF BEGIN'S ALLEGED "PEACE PROPOSAL," OPENED INTERVIEW SEEKING ASSAD'S REACTION.

2. SPEAKING FOR THE RECORD, ASSAD SAID "ANY SUCH PEACE PROPOSAL WAS DEFINITELY REJECTED." PRESIDENT THEN LAPSED INTO SILENCE. DEBORCHGRAVE ASKED IF BEGIN'S REPORTED IDEAS CONTAINED POSSIBLE BASIS FOR NEGOTIATIONS. ASSAD REPLIED WHAT HAD BEEN ATTRIBUTED TO GEGIN DID NOT CONSTITUTE A PEACE PLAN. ATER IT WAS A COLLECTION OF IDEAS AIMED AT LEGALIZING ISRAEL'S REMAINING IN THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES. IT WAS A "NON-STARTER AND NOT A BASIS FOR TALKS OR NEGOTIATIONS, A FACT BEGIN KNEW IN MAKING HIS PRESENTATION."

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3. ACCORDING DEBORCHGRAVE, ASSAD ALSO DISMISSED IDEAS OF ROTATING CHAIRMAN OR PROXIMITY TALKS, SAYING SINCE THE PROBLEMS WERE NOT SEPARATE, THERE THEREFORE WAS NO NEED FOR SEPARATE COMMITTEES. PRESIDENT STATED ONLY OPTION HE SAW WAS TO RECONVENE GENEVA TO DISCUSS "ELEMENTS OF PEACE."

4. FOREGOING JUST GIVEN ME BY DEBORCHGRAVE IN QUICK

DEBRIEFING OF HIS INTERVIEW OF ASSAD, WHICH TOGETHER WITH  
INTERVIEW HE EXPECTS HAVE WITH KING HUSSEIN TONIGHT AT  
AMMAN OR TOMORROW AT AQABA WILL CONSTITUTE HIS NEWSWEEK  
STORY NEXT WEEK. DEBORCHGRAVE SAID HE IS SCHEDULED INTERVIEW  
SADAT IN ALEXANDRIA SUNDAY EVENING, TOO LATE TO APPEAR IN  
NEXT NEWSWEEK.

5. COMMENT:

DEBORCHGRAVE WILL TELEX INTERVIEW TEXT FROM AMMAN TO  
DAMASCUS TOMORROW FOR FINAL CLEARANCE WITH PRESIDENCY.  
KNOWING DEBORCHGRAVE, STRONGLY DOUBT HE WOULD BE AMENABLE TO  
KILLING STORY. CAN ONLY HOPE OUR INTERVENTION WILL  
SERVE LIMIT FURTHER SYRIAN REACTION TO VIEWS THUS FAR ONLY  
ATTRIBUTED TO BEGIN. MUCH WILL DEPEND ON HOW ISRAELI  
PRIMIN HANDLES HIS PRESS CONFERENCE LATER TODAY.

6. SUGGEST DEPARTMENT PASS AMMAN, CAIRO, JIDDA, BEIRUT

TEL AVIV AND WHITE HOUSE.

MURPHY

SECRET

NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptoning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, PEACE PLANS, TERRITORIAL CLAIMS, CAT-B  
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**Decapton Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
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**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
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**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**TAGS:** PBOR, SY, US, IS, XF, (ASAD, HAFIZ), (BEGIN, MENACHEM), (DEBORCHGRAVE, ARNAUD)  
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**Review Markings:**  
Margaret P. Grafeld  
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22 May 2009  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009